

REMARKS

1. Reconsideration and further prosecution of the above-identified application are respectfully requested in view of the amendments and discussion that follows. Claims 1-37 are pending in this application.

Claims 1, 2, 4-9, 12, 13, 18, 19, 21-24, 27, 28, and 32-36 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Pat. No. 5,903,641 to Tonisson. Claims 3, 10, 11, 14-17, 20, 25, 26, 29-31, and 37 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Tonisson in view of U.S. Pat. No. 5,978,465 to Cordoroy et al. After a careful review of the claims, it has been concluded that the rejections are improper and the rejections are therefore traversed.

2. Independent claims 1, 18 and 32 have been further limited to the method step (and apparatus for) "providing an intelligent-agent rule-configuration screen on a supervisor's terminal that allows the supervisor to select from among a plurality of operational parameters and a monitoring schedule" to more precisely claim the subject matter of the invention. Support for the uses by the supervisor of the intelligent-agent rule-configuration screen on the supervisor terminal 28 and entry of a monitoring schedule may be found at page 7, lines 3-21.

3. Claims 1, 2, 4-9, 12, 13, 18, 19, 21-24, 27, 28, and 32-36 have been rejected as being obvious over Tonisson. In particular, the Examiner asserts that

"As to claim 1, Tonisson discloses the invention substantially as claimed including a method of allocating resources of a contact center (abstract; and col. 2, lines 60-61) comprising the steps of: selecting at least one operational parameter of a plurality of operational parameters of the contact center (col. 2, lines 12-13, 62-64); electronically monitoring the selected at least one operational parameter of the contact center (col. 1, lines 64-65; and col. 2, lines 12-13); performing a comparison between the operational parameter and a threshold value for the operational parameter (col. 10, lines 26-36; and col. 11, lines 6-11); and determining, based on the comparison, whether an action to be taken to affect allocation of resources of the contact center is necessary (col. 10, line 33 to col. 11, line 12; and Fig. 4)."

It is noted first in this regard that the claims are now limited to a supervisor interface that includes "an intelligent-agent rule-configuration screen". In this regard, "The rule-configuration screen comprises a software interface which enables the user to configure various aspects of the intelligent agent, including the monitors, thresholds, actions to be taken, and monitoring schedule" (specification, page 7, lines 6-8). In contrast, Tonisson is merely directed to a modeling system. Nowhere within Tonisson is there any teaching or suggestion of an "intelligent-agent rule-configuration screen" and certainly no teaching of any interface that allows a user to configure an intelligent agent to provide monitors, thresholds or actions to be taken.

In this regard, "The intelligent agent also can be instructed to monitor a time limit, such for moving contact-center agents from one agent group to another in anticipation of a one-time marketing or promotional campaign, for example, or to monitor for a particular time

period during which a particular agent group may generally experience elevated or reduced contact levels" (specification, page 8, lines 8-12). Nowhere within Tonisson is there any teaching or suggestion of any feature available through a supervisors terminal that may be used to anticipate one-time marketing or promotional campaigns.

It is noted next, that as demonstrated in the Response of 1/15/04, Tonisson specifically excludes the subject matter of the claimed invention. More specifically, Tonisson explicitly states that "Customers typically use a variety of metrics to measure call-center performance. These include oldest-call waiting (OCW), average speed of answer (ASA), and service level. This model does not take into account these measures because they can all be viewed as indicators of the percentage of utilization of the resources available for handling calls in the given skill. E.g., if the EWT for sales is too high, then this indicates that there are insufficient resources allocated to sales, i.e., the estimate of call volume for sales needs to be increased." (Tonisson, col. 7, lines 38-47).

Further, the examples given in the specification are clearly directed to the sufficiency in insufficiency of resources. For example, service level is explicitly excluded by Tonisson and is described in the specification at page 7, lines 15-23. The moving of agents from one agent group to another in anticipation of one-time marketing and promotional campaigns is clearly related to the sufficiency or insufficiency of agents in those groups and is described at page 8, lines 1-6. Other examples of the sufficiency or insufficiency of agents are described at page 8, lines 7-10 and include the times when contacts occur, the number of agents assigned to a particular agent

group and the number of agents available to service the contact center (taking account of agents who are unavailable due to illness, vacation, etc.).

Since Tonisson fails to teach or suggest "an intelligent-agent rule-configuration screen" and clearly excludes the subject matter of the claimed invention, Tonisson clearly does not teach each and every limitation of the claimed invention. Since Tonisson clearly does not teach each and every claim limitation, the rejection is improper and should be withdrawn.

4. Claims 3, 10, 11, 14-17, 20, 25, 26, 29-31, and 37 have been rejected as being obvious over Tonisson in view of Cordonroy et al. However, as demonstrated above, Tonisson does not teach or suggest "an intelligent-agent rule-configuration screen" and could not be modified as demonstrated above, because Tonisson explicitly excludes the subject matter of the claims. Since Tonisson does not teach or suggest "an intelligent-agent rule-configuration screen" and explicitly excludes the subject matter of the claims, the modification suggested by the Examiner would still not teach each and every limitation of the claims. Since the combination of Tonisson and Cordonroy et al. does not teach each and every claim limitation, the rejection is believed to be improper and should be withdrawn.

5. Allowance of claims 1-37, as now presented, is believed to be in order and such action is earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner be of the opinion that a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of the subject application, he is respectfully requested to telephone applicant's undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,
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